

What is claimed is:

1. A software tool for enabling automated tracking of activity related to the  
5 status and usage statistics of a plurality of Web sites on a data packet  
network comprising:
  - a network communication capability for establishing network  
communication between the software tool and the tracked Web sites;
  - a plurality of data-reporting modules for obtaining and reporting data  
10 about tracked Web sites;
  - a data input function for excepting data from the reporting modules  
and from external sources;
  - a data recording function for recording and logging the data received  
from the reporting modules and from the external sources; and
  - 15 a data management function for organizing and storing the received  
data and rendering the data accessible for use in software development.
2. The software tool of claim 1, wherein the data-packet-network is the  
Internet network.
- 20 3. The software tool of claim 2, wherein the network communication  
capability is established through hyperlinking to data reporting modules  
embedded within the tracked sites.
- 25 4. The software tool of claim 3, wherein the software tool is an Internet-  
based application executing and running on an Internet server.
5. The software tool of claim 4, wherein the software tool is accessible

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through a network-browser application.

6. The software tool of claim 4, wherein the plurality of data-reporting modules are characterized by the types of data reported by each module.

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7. The software tool of claim 6, wherein the external data sources include a software engineer.

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8. The software tool of claim 7, wherein the Web sites are mined for data for the purpose of enabling the software engineer to generate software scripts designed to provide automated access to functional services based on data results.

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9. The software tool of claim 8, further comprising a module for notifying the software engineer of any changes or updates to individual ones of the tracked Web sites.

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10. The software tool of claim 9, further comprising a module for testing software routines written by the software engineer concerning individual ones of the tracked Web sites.

11. A system for enabling automated tracking of activity related to the status and usage statistics of a plurality of Web sites on a data packet network comprising:

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a site-tracking server connected to the network and adapted for communication with other servers connected to the network;

a site-tracking software application residing in the site-tracking server, the site tracking software comprising a network communication

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capability, a plurality of data-reporting modules, a data input function, a data recording function, and a data management function for organizing and storing data;

5 a data repository accessible to the site-tracking server for storing data; and

a computerized workstation connected to the network for enabling access to the site tracking software, the data repository, and the site-tracking server.

10 12. The system of claim 11, wherein the data-packet-network is the Internet network.

15 13. The system of claim 12, wherein the network communication capability is established through hyperlinking to data reporting modules embedded within the tracked sites.

20 14. The system of claim 13, wherein the site-tracking software is accessible through a network-browser application installed on the computerized workstation.

15. The system of claim 14, wherein the computerized workstation is manned by a software engineer.

25 16. The system of claim 15, wherein the Web sites are mined for data for the purpose of enabling the software engineer to generate software scripts designed to provided access to functional services based on data results.

17. The system of claim 16, further comprising a module in the site-tracking

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software for notifying the software engineer of any changes or updates to individual ones of the tracked Web sites.

18. The system of claim 17, further comprising a module in the site-tracking software for testing software routines written by the software engineer concerning individual ones of the tracked Web sites.

19. A method for enabling automated tracking of activity related to the status and usage statistics of a plurality of Web sites on a data packet network comprising the steps of:

- (a) mining data from individual ones of tracked Web sites;
- (b) receiving the data from the Web sites through network communication with the servers hosting the web sites;
- (c) organizing and sorting the received data according to site-identification rules and data-type rules; and
- (d) storing the received data in a data repository connected to the network.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the method is practiced on the Internet network.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein in step (a), the data reporting modules are characterized by the types of data each module reports.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein in step (b), network communication between the site-tracking application and the Web sites is achieved through hyperlinking to embedded reporting modules.

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23. The method of claim 22, wherein the purpose for mining data from the Web-sites is to enhance capability of software engineers to write software routines to enable and maintain automated, functional access to services offered by the Web sites.

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